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9-2013

# CJUS 488.50: Forensic Science- Beyond Crime Lab

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### Recommended Citation

Snow, Meradeth H., "CJUS 488.50: Forensic Science- Beyond Crime Lab" (2013). *Syllabi*. 461.  
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**FORENSIC SCIENCE: BEYOND CRIME LAB**  
**CJUS 488**

**Online (Moodle): Fall, 2013**

**Instructor: Meradeth Snow, PhD**

**Office: 219 Social Sciences**

**Office Hours: 2-5pm Mondays**

**Email: meradeth.snow@umontana.edu**

**What to expect from this class:**

In this class students will learn the following things:

- The fundamental theories and practices of forensic science
- How conclusions are drawn from forensic evidence
- The roles of forensic scientists, police officers, attorneys, and others in a criminal investigation
- The types of questions and analyses addressed by a broad spectrum of forensic sciences
- The existence and nature of new and emerging forensic sciences
- The rigors of being an expert witness in a criminal trial
- The application of forensic sciences to a variety of non-traditional questions, such as wildlife regulations enforcement, national security, and history

**Class Information:**

**Text and other materials:** I recommend the following for students who desire to have a textbook for the class. The lecture text files posted on Moodle can be considered the “official text” for this class, and will be the information you will be responsible for on tests.

Skelton, Randall R. 2010. A Survey of the Forensic Sciences. First Edition.  
ISBN: 978-1-4357-6762-1

**Email Addresses:** Correspondence for this course will take place via email, or you are welcome to visit office hours on Mondays if you are located close by. I will utilize your official University email address, as listed on Moodle. If you chose to contact me using another email address, please be sure to identify yourself clearly. I will reply using the email you sent your message from, so be certain to check for replies there. If you do not know how to access your official University email, instructions can be found at <http://www.umt.edu/it/email/umconnect.aspx>.

**How Does This Class Work?** You can expect to spend as much time on this class as you would spend on a traditional “in the classroom” class, which I estimate to be about 6 hours per week for most students. The material is divided into 19 Lectures, of which two should be completed most weeks. Some weeks will be study weeks, in which only one lecture should be completed, and other weeks will be exam weeks where you are only expected to take an online exam.

For each lecture there are three main types of class materials on Moodle: Lecture text, Presentations, and Reviews. You should begin by reading the lecture text for the lecture, then working through the presentation for that lecture. Ideally, you should use the narrated

presentations, which simulate a classroom lecture experience. Finally, you should look through the review document which contains questions you should answer to test your knowledge of the subject matter of lectures, looking up the answers to the questions you miss in the lecture text.

**Class Materials:** The class materials are on the Moodle system. You should have been notified by email about how to access this system. Since you are reading this syllabus I assume that this process worked for you. All materials for successful completion of the class are on the Moodle system.

Note: some class materials are best accessed with particular browsers. The narrated lectures, in particular, are best accessed through Internet Explorer. If you are experiencing difficulties in accessing anything, please try another browser to see if that solves the issue.

**Attendance and Progress Policy:** Continuous progress in the class is required. In other words, you cannot put everything off until the last week and expect to finish the class successfully.

**Grading:** 75% of your grade will be based on your top three scores on the four required exams for the course. The remaining 25% will be based on weekly assignments. The following scale will be used for assigning grades: A: 90-100%, B: 80-89%, C: 60-79%, D: 50-59%, F: under 50%. If appropriate, I may assign + and - modifiers to these grades in special cases.

**Exams:** Exams will normally consist of about 50 objective questions. The Moodle system requires exams to be made available online for a certain limited time span. Normally the exam will be available between 12:01am Monday and 11:55pm Sunday of the week in which it appears in the class schedule. Moodle will give you two hours in which to take the exam. If you experience problems accessing the exam, leaving Moodle and returning in a few minutes often fixes the problem. I suggest allocating a block of time to take the exam during which you will be undisturbed.

Computer glitches are always a risk, so you should allot yourself extra time to take into account problems with your connection, or with Moodle. Only outages on the Moodle end of the system will be accepted as excuses for not completing an assignment or exam.

**Weekly Assignments:** Each week, except for study weeks and exam weeks, an assignment is due. Assignments will normally send you to a resource on the net, to a task, usually a tutorial or quiz. Each assignment is due Sunday at 11:55 PM of the week in which it is listed in the class syllabus/schedule.

Assignments will be submitted using Moodle's uploading file system, and must be named and formatted as described: using the uploading feature on Moodle, please use a version of Microsoft Word, rich text (.rtf), html (.htm, .html), or text (.txt). The file containing your answers must be named using this format: LastName\_FirstName\_AssignmentNumber (for example, my submission for assignment 1 would be named: Snow\_Meradeth\_1).

In general, I will grade assignments as either completed (full credit) or not completed (no credit), although there will be assignments with different grading criteria. I will always deduct points for an assignment that is not done and submitted according to instructions.

**How to Complete This Course Successfully:** The “secret for success” in an online class is strategic time allocation along with continuous engagement. In simple terms, allocate time for the class on a regular basis each week. Most authorities on online classes suggest that a student set aside regularly scheduled times each week to accomplish what the class requires.

Estimating that this class will require about 6 hours of your time each week you should create a weekly schedule of set times you plan on dedicating to the course, and stick to them. In online classes it is especially unwise to wait until the last minute to turn in assignments or take online tests, because of the possibility of technology failure.

**Academic Integrity:** Students will be held to the provisions of the Student Conduct Code, online at <http://www.umt.edu/studentaffairs/CODE.htm>, with regards to cheating, plagiarism, abusive language, and other issues. Violations will not be tolerated.

**Disabilities:** Every effort has been made to make the online materials accessible to students with disabilities. If you have a problem accessing the materials, you should let your instructor know what accommodation you require. Further information regarding accommodation services and facilities can be provided by the Disability Services for Students office (see <http://www.umt.edu/dss/>).

<b>ANTH 488: SCHEDULE</b>		
<b>Week/Dates</b>	<b>Lecture</b>	<b>Readings from Text</b>
1) AUG 26 – SEPT 1	1. Forensic Science and Criminal Investigations  2. The Scientific Method  <b>Assignment 1: Getting Acquainted with Moodle</b>	Chapters 1 - 4
2) SEPT 2 – 8	3. The Crime Scene, Crime Lab, and Criminalists  4. Firearms, Toolmarks, Prints Documents & Trace  <b>Assignment 2: An Investigation</b>	Chapters 6, 8, 10-14, 16,17
3) SEPT 9 – 15	5. Death Investigation, Toxicology, Serology and DNA  6. Forensic Anthropology and Odontology  <b>Assignment 3</b>	Chapters 19 – 22, 24-28

4) SEPT 16 – 22	7. Drugs and Explosives  ***Study for Exam***	Chapters 23, 31
5) SEPT 23 – SEPT 29	<b>MIDTERM 1</b>	
6) SEPT 30 - OCT 6	8. Forensic Botany, Entomology & Geology  9. Jurisprudence  <b>Assignment 4</b>	Chapters 29, 46
7) OCT 7 – 13	10. Forensic Psychology  11. Criminal Profiling  <b>Assignment 5</b>	Chapters 38 - 41
8) OCT 14 – 20	12. Historical Forensics  13. Wildlife Forensics  <b>Assignment 6</b>	Chapters 48, 49
9) OCT 21 – OCT 27	14. Other Forensic Technologies: Forensic Knots, Linguistics, Phylogenetics, Mathematics, Economics, Meteorology, Hypnosis, Audio, Nursing, Pharmacy, Accounting, Art, Photography, Chiropractic and other medical practices  ***Study for Exam***	Chapter 47
10) OCT 28 – NOV 3	<b>MIDTERM 2</b>	
11) NOV 4 – 10	15. Forensic Computer Science  16. Computer Networks & Security  <b>Assignment 7</b>	Chapters 33, 34
12) NOV 11 – 17	17. Surveillance and Biometrics  18. Homeland Security  <b>Assignment 8</b>	Chapters 36, 45
14) NOV 25 – DEC 1	19. White Collar, Corporate, and Organized Crime  ***Study for Exam***	Chapters 43, 44

13) NOV 18 – 24	Thanksgiving Vacation	
15) DEC 2 – 8	MIDTERM 3	
16) DEC 9 – 13	FINAL EXAM	